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## DISCUSSION.

## THE VIVISECTION PROBLEM : A REJOINDER.

I have neither the desire nor the time to reply at length to Dr. Leffingwell's criticism in the January number of this JOURNAL (Vol. XV, pp. 221-231) to my paper in the April number, 1904 (Vol. XIV, pp. 312-321).

Dr. Leffingwell asks, "What . . . has the value of vaccination in small-pox . . . to do with the vivisection of animals?" Is he unaware that the supply of lymph for the purpose of vaccination in civilized communities is derived from calves who are expressly inoculated for the purpose?

He asks, "Where are the proofs that the mortality from typhoid fever in any country has been reduced by the general use of the 'appropriate antitoxin'?" He will find them in Dr. G. E. Wright's data derived from the Boer War, which are gaining general acceptance.

Then he inquires, "What has this [the fact that Havana is practically rid of yellow fever] to do with experiments on animals?" I will tell him. Yellow fever has been vanquished by the destruction of mosquitoes; the relation of mosquitoes to yellow fever was suggested by their already proven relation to malaria; our knowledge of the life-history of the malarial parasite was in great measure due to experiments on birds.

He suggests that the reason why there is no record of failure in the use of antivenene as a remedy against snake-bite is that this remedy has never been tried. I refer him to the list of cases of snake-bite successfully treated by antivenene in the "Twentieth Century Practice of Medicine," Vol. XX, pp. 527-528.

Surely then, Dr. Leffingwell is very right when he says, "It seems to us that first of all there must be the general creation of public sentiment which shall be eager . . . *to know with certainty the facts.*"

He accuses English physicians of experimenting with poisons on patients of a London hospital. He gives no details, but I unhesitatingly declare such abominable accusations to be false. He charges his fellow-countrymen with experimenting on the incurably insane. But in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1901, Professor Keen has already proved the "garbled and inaccurate" nature of this charge. The recent English libel action of Bayler *v.* Coleridge has shown us how such anti-vivisectionist

methods may be satisfactorily dealt with. I will merely express my surprise that a scientifically educated man can be found who ventures to make capital out of the popular aversion to "experiment," who ignores the fact that every advance in the art of healing must necessarily be "experimental" at the outset.

Dr. Leffingwell tries to convict me of sympathy with Dr. Klein's attitude towards vivisection generally, because I presumably interpreted one of his answers before the Royal Commission. Dr. Leffingwell has omitted to state that Dr. Klein vainly begged the Commissioners to amend his evidence, as "when under *viva voce* examination the fact of my being a foreigner made me often not able to appreciate all the purport of the questions which were asked of me and that therefore my answers were not always such as I would have desired to give if I had quite understood the question." This letter and the amended evidence could hardly escape the careful reader's notice, as they are referred to in the first page of the Report and are published at length in an Appendix. The Appendix throws an altogether different light on Dr. Klein's real attitude. Suffice it to say that my personal acquaintance with this eminent pathologist assures me that he is incapable of unnecessary cruelty.

But what is Dr. Leffingwell's attitude in regard to vivisection? He must be well aware that there is not a physician of eminence at the present day who believes that animals "are tortured to little or no purpose" for scientific objects. Yet he attributes unverifiable quotations to the editor of the *Lancet*, which after special inquiry I have good reasons for doubting, and he mixes up modern with past opinions, thus successfully confusing the ignorant. But although he uses all the methods of the anti-vivisectionists, he has not the courage to decry vivisection "in certain phases." He does not choose to tell us what particular "phases" are to be condemned. He pretends that vivisections are shrouded in mystery and suggests that under present arrangements physiologists are in the habit of keeping secret the experiments so cruelly made by them on animals!

CHARLES S. MYERS.

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## COMMENTS ON MR. MYERS' REJOINER.

Mr. Myers refers to certain "quotations," (there was but one,) "attributed to the Editor of the *Lancet*, which, *after special inquiry*, I have good reasons for doubting." The leading editorial in the *Lancet* of August 22, 1863, is a vigorous arraignment of vivisection as a method of teaching well-known facts. Said the Editor of the *Lancet*: "The entire picture of vivisectional illustration of ordinary lectures is to us, personally *repulsive in the extreme*. Look, for example at the animal before us, stolen (to begin with) from his master;" and then follow the words which Mr. Myers imagined it was safe to doubt. "We repudiate the whole of this class of procedure," adds the writer of the *Lancet* editorial. And while Mr. Myers is verifying the accuracy of this quotation, if he will also take the trouble to look up the editorials on vivisection which appeared in the *Lancet* of August 11, 1860, October 20, 1860, February 6, 1875, and August 21, 1875; in the *Medical Times and Gazette* (London) of March 2, 1861, and August 16, 1862; in the *British Medical Journal* of May 11, 1861, October 19, 1861, September 6, 1862, August 22, 1863, September 19, 1863, January 16, 1864, and June 11, 1864, he will see how the horrible cruelties that sometimes pertain to scientific experimentation upon animals were regarded by the medical profession of England a generation ago. Mr. Myers calls these "past opinions." Since they relate to ethics, how do they cease to be of value because forty years old?

In my paper there was a line referring in the briefest way possible to Ringer's experiments in a London hospital, upon his unfortunate patients. Apparently Mr. Myers never heard of them; but he says, "I unhesitatingly declare such abominable accusations to be false," with a fervor that certainly does credit to his heart. But suppose the abominable accusations are proven true, in what position does Mr. Myers then find himself? Nothing is more certain than that Dr. Ringer in his work on "Therapeutics" and in medical journals like the *Lancet*, stated that he had made such "experiments"; among other poisons thus experimented with, and duly described, were muscarin, gelsemium and ethyl-atropium. In the *Medical Times* (London) for November 10, 1883, the editor thus refers to certain of Dr. Ringer's experiments:

"In publishing—and, indeed, in instituting *their reckless experiments* on the effect of nitrite of sodium on the human subject, Professor Ringer and Dr. Murrell have made a deplorably false

move. . . . It is impossible to read the paper in last week's *Lancet* without distress. Of the eighteen adults to whom Drs. Ringer and Murrell administered the drug in ten-grain doses all but one averred that they would expect to drop down dead if they ever took another dose. One woman fell to the ground and lay with throbbing head and nausea for three hours. The next series of experiments was with five-grain doses. The same results followed in ten out of sixteen cases. . . . Whatever credit may be given to Drs. Ringer and Murrell for scientific enthusiasm, it is impossible to acquit them of grave indiscretion. There will be a howl throughout the country if it comes out that officers of a public charity are in the habit of trying such useless and cruel experiments on the patients committed to their care."

"*Useless and cruel experiments on patients*"—that is the charge made against Dr. Ringer by a leading medical journal of his own city. I did not stigmatize these experiments in any way; that was done by his own countrymen.

In bringing forward the fact that the Royal Commission declined to permit Dr. Klein to substitute his amended remarks for his actual statements, I cannot see that Mr. Myers renders any great service to his physiological friend. A writer takes accepted testimony, not rejected and discredited inventions. The inquiring reader should procure a copy of Dr. Klein's testimony, so far as it related to his personal practices, and see if in Dr. Klein's replies to the questions asked him, he can discern the slightest evidence of inadequate comprehension.

If Mr. Myers thinks that reference to some army surgeon's experience during the Boer War supplies the statistics of a country, for which I asked; if he does not know that vaccination was carried on for nearly seventy years, independently of calf-lymph, and that the vivisection of animals contributed nothing to Jenner's discovery; if he fancies that the freedom of Havana from yellow fever,—by no means so assured as when he wrote,—may be attributed to experiments on birds; if he believes that reference to certain alleged cures of snake-bite by antivenene furnish me with evidence of decreased mortality in a nation like that of India, where 20,000 deaths from this cause annually occur,—then I fear that no amount of reasoning, within space available here, would convince him of errors,—which indeed are quite excusable in one neither a physician nor a vivisector.

If this discussion must close here, let it be on my part with an

appreciation. Of Mr. Myers' sincerity and intellectual honesty I can have no doubt. Concerning vivisection, he writes from what he has been told; I write from what I have personally seen. Thirty five years ago, I should have written as he writes to-day, inspired by the delusion that science can make ethical laws for herself. And yet it is possible that were ours the opportunity of an extended contrast of views, we should find not a few points of agreement. He would certainly discover that I am not an anti-vivisectionist; and that everything in the way of painless experimentation seems to me as unobjectionable as to himself. On the other hand, I think I should be able to point out to him lines of vivisection, the cruelty and wickedness of which are so manifest, that, convinced of their existence, he could not fail to condemn them as severely as did the Editors of the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet* forty years ago.

ALBERT LEFFINGWELL.

AURORA, NEW YORK.

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### BOOK REVIEWS.

DEMOCRACY AND REACTION. By L. T. Hobhouse. London: Fisher Unwin, 1904. Pp. 244.

Mr. Hobhouse's most recent book opens with a sentence that announces the standpoint adopted in the pages that follow and at the same time offers a direct challenge to a school of thought that has lately been dominant and is still exceedingly powerful. "During some twenty or thirty years a wave of reaction has spread over the civilized world and invaded one department after another of thought and action." Those who, like the present reviewer, are convinced of the truth of these words will be eager to learn Mr. Hobhouse's opinion as to the causes of this reaction and to discover in which direction to look for remedies. Those who deny that a reaction has taken place will make acquaintance with the reasons which this earnest and eloquent advocate advances in proof of his contention. Both classes alike will find not only a singularly incisive criticism of current ideas but also a substantial contribution to sociological discussion. The work arrests attention both as a pronouncement on the outstanding controversies of the time and as an analysis of the complex ethical and scientific problems which lie at the back of all serious political thinking. Its place is with Maine's "Essays on Popular